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ABSTRACT

Guidelines are presented to help foundations and others ensure that the activities they fund treat women and girls fairly and address issues concerning women. Formal impact statements can help foundations examine their grant programs by asking a series of questions about: applicants' commitment to ending discrimination; the access of women and girls to the programs and services that will be provided; the inclusion of women as researchers and administrators; the evaluation of program results and of print and other materials for sex bias; the inclusion of women in scholarship, fellowship, and award programs; and evaluation data that yields information about women. The questions can be adapted to assess the impact on other specific groups, such as minorities, and may be useful to institutions other than foundations that want to assess their own programs. Over 50 questions are provided, including: whether the grantee has a formal policy prohibiting discrimination in employment; whether the grantee periodically reviews the status of women within its organization; whether there is a formal policy prohibiting sex discrimination in programs and services; whether women are included as subjects of research; whether research design and instruments are reviewed for possible bias; and whether women are featured in publicity materials. (SW)

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SPECIAL REPORT - Program Evaluation Number 2 - Fall 1984

HOW IMPACT STATEMENTS CAN HELP FOUNDATIONS ASSESS PROGRAMS FOR THEIR IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS: or, HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE REALLY BEING FAIR TO WOMEN AND GIRLS.

Bernice Resnick Sandler

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SPECIAL REPORT PROGRAM EVALUATION

NUMBER 2 FALL 1984

This report, originally developed for foundation use, will also be of help to colleges and universities in evaluating their own programs and research activities.

HOW IMPACT STATEMENTS CAN HELP FOUNDATIONS ASSESS PROGRAMS FOR THEIR IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS: or,

HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE REALLY BEING FAIR TO WOMEN AND GIRLS

BERNICE RESNICK SANDLER

WHY AN IMPACT STATEMENT?

Foundations, institutions and organizations want to be fair, and want their programs to provide equal opportunities to females. Indeed, many foundations have developed special programs to help women and girls. However, many other foundation-funded programs which are not aimed specifically at females may inadvertently restrict access for women and girls, or treat them differently, even though there may be formal policies prohibiting discrimination. A scholarship program, for example, may informally give preference to men because personnel administering the funds inaccurately believe that women are more likely to drop out of school or leave their careers should they marry. A foundation-funded commission may only have one or two women on it. A program to train minority youth for technical jobs may enroll men almost exclusively, despite the fact that the unemployment rate for minority teenage females exceeds that of minority teenage males. Moreover, all too often women and girls are overlooked by foundation-sponsored research. For example, with one minor exception, the recent reports on the state of the nation's schools did not deal with problems of equity for girls—despite the fact that schools may play a major role in discouraging girls from achievements in mathematics and the sciences and thus limit their career choices.

Rarely, if ever, do programs *intend* to discriminate. However, program administrators within foundations, educational institutions and other organizations, even with the best of will, are often unaware of how their programs affect women and particularly whether their programs unintentionally perpetuate sex bias or unfairness. (The term "woman" also applies to girls where appropriate throughout the article.) Unless a special effort is made to assess how programs affect women, many programs will inadvertently continue to serve males better than females.

One way to examine programs is to develop a formal impact evaluation procedure. An impact evaluation can help assess the wisdom of implementing a particular program; help decide whether special procedures are needed to insure women's access and participation or to address their concerns; and help determine whether distinct programs are necessary for women. It should be a regular part of the planning and implementation process. Indeed, impact evaluation procedures can help staff gain a better understanding of women's issues and how to deal with them in relation to proposed and ongoing activities at both the institutional and program level.

What follows is a series of questions which can be used to evaluate many kinds of proposals and programs, not only whether women and girls are being treated fairly, but also whether pertinent issues concerning women are being addressed. The questions can be adapted to assess the impact on other specific groups, such as minorities, and may also be useful to institutions other than foundations which wish to assess their own programs. Additionally, some of the questions might be fruitfully directed at foundations themselves as well as toward grantees. Not all the questions will be appropriate for all situations, and foundations might well want to design their own impact evaluation questionnaire tailored to their own needs.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

"Impact statements" caught the public eye almost a decade ago when environmental results began to be predicted from activities using air, water or land.

When Dr. Bernice R. Sandler told me that she had been using the impact concept to assess gender fairness in programs, I asked her to write a guide for program funders and to let WAF/CP publish it. The tool was just the type of information we try to bring to grantmakers. The author's wide knowledge of gender equity issues, her years of successful program management, and her experience in working with funders made Dr. Sandler the best person to put these elements together.

WAF/CP cares about all programs open to women and girls, not only those segregated by sex. We think you as funders will find many of the questions in this guide helpful to your program assessment efforts. The questions often apply to race or age discrimination as well as to gender. We think that many of the items, raised in a field visit or in application and renewal procedures, will help you insure the fairest possible use of grant dollars.

Vassar College is a rarity among coeducational colleges. Women hold the top administrative posts. Left, Mary Draper Janney, chair of the board of trustees and Virginia B. Smith, president. Photograph: Dixie Sheridan.

WHAT SHOULD BE COVERED?

The assessment should cover the prospective grantee's organization as well as the particular program to be funded. Policies and practices might also be evaluated where appropriate. A partial list of issues follows.

WHAT EVIDENCE CAN THE APPLICANT PROVIDE TO SHOW ITS COMMITMENT TO END DISCRIMINATION AND ITS AWARENESS OF WOMEN'S ISSUES?

Does the grantee have a *formal* policy prohibiting discrimination in employment?

Does the grantee periodically review the status of women within its organization? Does it collect data about women on its staff? Are reports available? Were proposed recommendations to improve the status of women implemented?

Have top administrators included women's issues in speeches, publications and elsewhere?

Are all official publications evaluated to see that they do not communicate negative messages about women? (See section on print materials).

Are women included among the service providers?

Will women be employed in the program itself in other than traditionally female job classifications? Do women participate in the development of policy, program planning and implementation? Does information about the staff in terms of titles, responsibilities and salaries reveal differences between men and women? For example, the Ford Foundation asks grantees a series of questions about women and minority representation.

Does the applicant organization make any special outreach efforts to recruit women and minorities? If new staff will be hired to implement the grant, will any special efforts be made to recruit women and minorities?

Are women represented on the board of directors? On advisory committees?

WILL WOMEN HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GRANT?

Is there a *formal* policy prohibiting sex discrimination in programs and services? A written policy will, at a minimum, alert people to the possibility that discrimination may exist.

What procedures exist or may be needed to attract women who could be served by the program?

What procedures exist or may be needed to reach out to *special* groups of women who might benefit from the program, such as minority women, older women, working mothers and the like.

Will community health and social service programs for adults and children provide evening and/or weekend hours to accommodate mothers who work in paid employment? More than half the mothers of school age children are in the labor force.

Is there any overt discrimination?

Some United Funds give substantially more dollars to male organizations such as Boy Scouts than to Girl Scouts, even though the membership numbers of these groups may be similar. Other services aimed at women and girls may also receive limited or no funding, such as services for battered women, rape crisis centers, etc.

If the program is officially restricted to males, is the justification appropriate? Should the program be integrated or should a parallel program be developed for females? For example, should a program to rehabilitate prisoners be aimed only at male prisoners?

Is preference given to males, either formally or informally?

In some leadership development programs, selection may be based on the assumption that men are "natural" leaders and hence the most appropriate participants. Programs aimed at helping schools teach children about computers may serve boys quite well, but have substantially less participation from girls.

What procedures insure that women and girls are not channeled exclusively into traditional roles within the program?

In some training programs for handicapped youngsters girls learn homemaking skills while boys learn job-related skills.

Young carpenters.

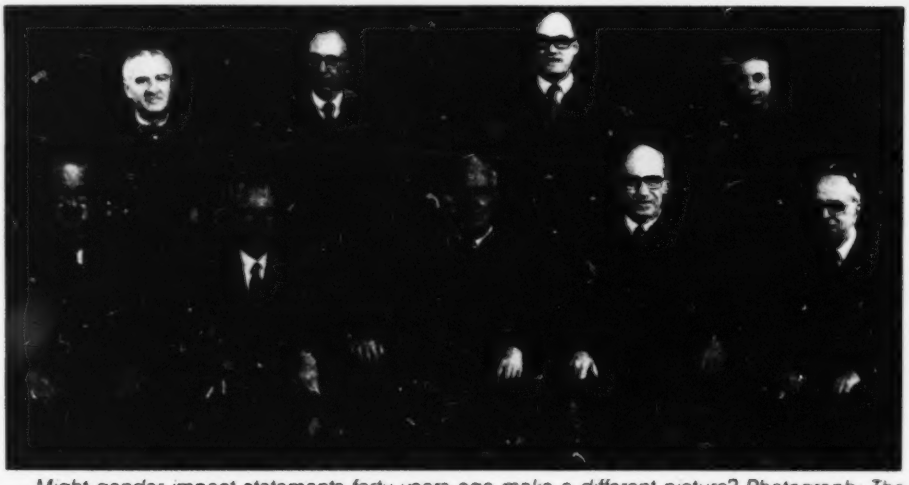
What procedures will insure that special problems and needs of women will be taken into account? For example, women who cannot attend a training program full-time because of family responsibilities may be excluded from the program unless they receive help with the care of their children or unless the schedule for training is made flexible.

Is there any unintended disproportionate impact on specific groups of women? How has the grantee evaluated the potential impact of the program on specific groups of women such as:

minority women
poor women
single women
older women
women who are single heads-of-household
displaced homemakers
mothers, including working mothers
housewives
unemployed women
young women
disabled women

Are special programs or efforts necessary for any of these groups?

Will the applicant collect data about women served by the grant?



Might gender impact statements forty years ago make a different picture? Photograph: The Supreme Court Historical Society ©

DOES RESEARCH TAKE WOMEN INTO ACCOUNT?

Are women included as *subjects* of the research?

One large federally sponsored heart research program had no females subjects, even though heart disease is a major killer of women. In many if not most instances results of research done on one sex may not be applicable to both sexes.

Will the research design as well as the instruments used be reviewed for possible bias?

Is the research based on underlying assumptions about the lives of men and women that may result in biased or inaccurate findings? For example, do studies of conflicts between career and family focus on women and ignore conflicts men may have? Does a study of minority students and faculty assume that there are no differences in enrollment and hiring of minority males and females? (There are.) Does a report on teenage pregnancy neglect the involvement of males?

Are there similar underlying assumptions about *different* groups of women? Does a study of poor women assume that most women on welfare are minorities so that poor white women are not studied?

Does research on social inequity also include gender inequities?

Will data be collected by sex (and race and ethnicity) and be analyzed for differences? Will this be included in the final report?

What procedures insure that issues that affect women—such as breast cancer or teenage pregnancy—will be researched as appropriate in the scope of work?

WILL PRINT AND OTHER MATERIALS BE EVALUATED FOR SEX BIAS?

Audio-visuals and printed materials, such as books, reports, newsletters, pamphlets and brochures, news releases, conference proceedings, etc., may sometimes show women in stereotyped roles, or simply omit females altogether. Pictures may show only males (or women in very small numbers) or depict women primarily in roles such as housewife, teacher, secretary or nurse. Males may be portrayed as "doers" and females as "watchers." Women may not be quoted or referred to as often as men. Generic terms such as "he" and "mankind" may be used, even though there is now a substantial body of research which indicates that readers generally interpret these terms to refer only to males. There may even be derogatory comments about women and women's concerns.

WHAT ELSE CAN FOUNDATIONS DO?

In addition to asking applicants specific questions about their prospective grant and their organizations, foundations can also do the following to insure fairness:

- In materials describing the foundation's guidelines for grants:
  - include a requirement that applicants do not discriminate;
  - let applicants know that they will be evaluated for sex fairness.

    At the National Institute of Education prior to the Reagan administration, the Education and Work Group as well as the Women's Research Staff (now disbanded) included sex fairness criteria in their grant guidelines and requests for proposals;
  - suggest or require that material and products underwritten by the foundation be sex fair;
  - provide guidelines for grantees to help them evaluate their materials and products for sex fairness.
- Keep annual data on how many grants deal specifically with women and girls, as well as how many grants included attention to women's issues although women's issues were not the focus of the grant. Include these data in annual reports.
- Require data on how many women or girls (by race by sex) were served by the grant.
- Use experts in women's issues as consultants to evaluate particular grants where appropriate.
- Ensure that there are no lost opportunities to counter stereotyped notions about women and men or to help people understand women's issues more clearly. For example, a report on the future of the economy should deal with the impact of women working; a report on minority poverty should discuss the fact that women with children account for the largest increase in poverty. Additionally, foundation administrators and program officers can use speeches, publications and informal talks as a way to indicate their commitment to equity and to help others learn about the importance and substance of women's issues.

The following questions may help avoid this kind of bias:

Will there be a review of materials to insure that they are not sex-biased in language or visuals? What procedures will be used? Will questions such as the following be asked. Are pictures of both males and females included, and in roughly the same numbers where appropriate? Are women shown in non-stereotyped roles? One campus publication depicted male students studying and working in laboratories; female students were shown lounging at the pool and as "dates." Are terms such as the generic "man" or "he" used to represent all persons?

Does the grantee have its own formal guidelines to evaluate materials?

Will publicity materials mention that efforts were made to be sex fair?

Are women featured in publicity materials?

PROGRAM EVALUATION: DOES DATA COLLECTION ABOUT THE PROGRAM'S IMPACT YIELD INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN?

Many of the questions asked of applicants can also be asked in evaluating completed projects. Additionally, the following questions may help identify the program's impact on women.

Will data about the program be *collected* by sex, and cross-tabulated by race and ethnicity (such as black men, black women) so that disparate impact on women, and especially minority women, can be evaluated?

Will the data be *analyzed* and *reported* by sex?

Coal Employment Project
Photograph: Earl Dotter

SCHOLARSHIP, FELLOWSHIP AND AWARD PROGRAMS

Foundations give large amounts of money to provide scholarships for students and to underwrite numerous prestigious fellowships, awards and prizes. Yet several studies show that women receive smaller amounts in grant money than men, and that they are less likely to receive prestigious fellowships and grants. Special efforts are often necessary if women are to obtain their fair share of grants and awards. The following questions can help foundations evaluate the fellowship programs they sponsor:

Is there a formal policy stating that the program will be administered in a non-discriminatory manner?

Does the program announcement include a statement that women and minorities, including minority women, are encouraged to apply?

Has the announcement been evaluated for inadvertent sex bias?

Pictures of former winners if predominantly or totally male may inadvertently discourage women from applying or being nominated. Criteria descriptions in generic male terms such as "He should have completed his junior year" may do the same thing. In contrast, the use of "he or she" reminds nominators that women are potential candidates.

Is there public outreach in general as well as specific outreach efforts to encourage women as applicants and nominators?

Information about some fellowships and awards is disseminated primarily by informal networks of senior faculty, former winners, etc., which may include few or no women.

Have criteria been evaluated to see if they inadvertently exclude women or certain groups of women?

Age limitations may exclude women who return to school after raising a family. Similarly, restricting awards to single persons or to full-time students may eliminate a large number of women from consideration.

Are criteria so vague that they can unknowingly be interpreted to favor men?

For example, judges may "measure" criteria such as "well-roundedness" to be synonymous with athletic participation, an area in which women still have more limited opportunities than men.

Are women included in the nominating process? Do nominating, interviewing and judging committees include women?

Are there guidelines for interviewing candidates?

Women students are often asked about how they will "manage" their family—a question men are rarely asked.

Vassar College, Chemistry laboratory. Photograph: Dixie Sheridan

Are data collected, reported and analyzed concerning the number of women who apply (or are nominated) and who actually receive awards as compared to men? Are data kept and analyzed by sex and race/ethnicity as well to identify any disparate trends for minority women and men?

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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

For a detailed analysis of how women may be treated differently in the awards process and miss opportunities for financial aid and recognition, see "Women Winners" by Roberta M. Hall and Bernice R. Sandler, 1982, Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. $2.00.

The American Sociological Association prepared a short document, "Sexist Biases in Sociological Research: Problems and Issues" which identifies five aspects of research where bias frequently occurs and gives examples. Appeared in *Footnotes*, American Sociological Association, 1980. Also available from the Project on the Status and Education of Women, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. $.50. The American Education Research Association is also developing sex fair guidelines for research.

The American Jewish Committee has developed a questionnaire for social service agencies to evaluate the impact of services on different kinds of families such as two parent families and single parent families. "The Jewish Family Impact Questionnaire: A Self-Assessment Tool for Jewish Communal Organizations" is available for $.50 from The American Jewish Committee, Publications, 165 East 56 Street, New York, NY 10022.

The "Institutional Self-Study Guide on Sex Equity for Postsecondary Institutions" by Karen Bogart is a useful set of five booklets in checklist form for evaluating colleges and universities. Available from the Project on the Status and Education of Women, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. $10.00.

The Project on the Status and Education of Women (PSEW) is the oldest national project dealing with women in higher education. The project publishes a quarterly newsletter, *On Campus with Women* and numerous materials, such as sexual harassment, re-entry women, minority women and campus climate issues. Many of these can be used for self-evaluation purposes. Write PSEW at 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009 for a free sample of the newsletter and a list of publications.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bernice Resnick Sandler, Ph.D. is the director of the Project on the Status and Education of Women of the Association of American Colleges. She was the first congressional committee staff member appointed to work specifically in the area of women's rights and has the longest continuous involvement with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Dr. Sandler was a co-recipient of a Rockefeller Public Service Award in 1976. She is the author of many publications on the subject of women and education.

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